



Committee on Finance and the Northampton City Council

*Councilor Gina-Louise Sciarra, Chair
Councilor Marianne LaBarge, Vice Chair
Councilor Michael J. Quinlan, Jr.
Councilor John Thorpe*

On line Zoom Teleconference Meeting

Meeting Date: May 7, 2020

Note: The Finance Committee Meeting took place during the City Council Meeting as announced. The City Council Meeting began at 7 p.m.

1. **Meeting Called To Order:** At 8:18 p.m., Councilor Sciarra called the meeting to order.
2. **Roll Call:** Present were committee members Gina-Louise Sciarra (Chair), Marianne LaBarge (Vice-Chair), Michael J. Quinlan, Jr. and John Thorpe. Also present from the City Council were William H. Dwight, Alex Jarrett, Karen Foster, Rachel Maiore and Jim Nash.
3. **Approval of Minutes From The Previous Meeting**
 - A. **Minutes of April 16, 2020**

Councilor Quinlan moved to approve the minutes of April 16, 2020. Councilor Thorpe seconded. The motion passed unanimously 4:0 by roll call vote.
4. **Financial Orders**
 - A. **20.049 An Order for FY2020 Budget Transfers**

Councilor Sciarra read the order, reviewing the proposed transfers.

Councilor LaBarge moved to forward the order with a positive recommendation. Councilor Thorpe seconded.

Typically this time of year they generally would be looking at the snow and ice account to true it up, so two of the larger transfers are items they would normally see, Mayor Narkewicz reminded. Other proposed transfers are projections to get them through the end of the year. Obviously, they are seeing a lot of over-time directly attributable to the COVID-19 crisis. The public health department is working seven days a week and the public health director and public health nurse are probably working 60 to 80 hours a week. Also, as part of collective bargaining agreements, there is language relating to states of emergency. People working remotely from home are being paid regular time, but, in cases where employees have to go in and work during states of emergency, they are paid time and a half. That is why they are seeing overtime in departments that would not usually earn overtime, such as the auditors and collectors' offices. Some of these functions can't be done remotely. Checks that have to be processed or cut to pay bills have to be

City Council Committee on Finance Meeting Minutes for May 7, 2020

done on premises. They've tried to be judicious in authorizing work on-site. This is their attempt to true up budgets to cover what they think will be potential overtime for the rest of this year.

Councilor Dwight asked about the longevity payment for the auditor's office.

Longevity payments are contractually required when employees reach certain thresholds of service, Mayor Narkewicz explained. After the budget passed last year, there were some changes to longevity amounts. This expense would be there whether there was COVID19 or not. The out of grade pay is because the principal assessor is on medical leave so the assistant assessor is essentially acting as the assessor.

Councilor Jarrett asked how many of the transfers are COVID-related and whether they will be eligible for reimbursement

That is the key, Mayor Narkewicz confirmed. They are keeping very close track, he assured. Anything that's related to COVID19 will be eligible for 70% reimbursement. The city has a very sophisticated tracking system and a dedicated staff person keeping very detailed records (Josh Shanley in Fire Rescue). They will do their best to seek as much reimbursement as possible.

Administrators don't know when reimbursement will be received. For some past disasters it has taken two or three years to realize reimbursement. He corrected himself that reimbursement is 75%/25%. The motion passed unanimously 4 Yes, 0 No by roll call vote.

5. **New Business**

None.

6. **Adjourn:** There being no further business, Councilor LaBarge moved to adjourn. Councilor Quinlan seconded. The motion carried on a roll call vote of 4 Yes, 0 No. The meeting adjourned at 8:30 p.m.

Contact: G-L Sciarra @glsciarra@northamptonma.gov or 413-570-3133